

### POLIOMYELITIS STUDIES AT LOS ANGELES COUNTY HOSPITAL

The June CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE, on page 410, in the article on the present status of epidemic poliomyelitis, by Director J. D. Dunshee of the State Board of Health, printed a line cut showing the California incidence curves of the disease in the years 1925, 1927, 1930 and 1934. This year its morbidity is running less true to past form. An increasing number of cases may be expected as the disease travels northward from southern California. The outbreak has attracted the attention of medical men and research workers throughout the United States. In addition to the representatives from the Rockefeller Foundation, it is possible that other research workers will come to California to study the disease. The following news account, taken from the Los Angeles Times of June 18, in which attention is called to the arrival at the Los Angeles County Hospital of representatives from the Rockefeller Institute and Yale University, may have interest to physicians in other parts of the state:

"Arriving on the Santa Fe from the East yesterday afternoon, Dr. John R. Paul and Dr. Leslie T. Webster, sent to Los Angeles by the Rockefeller Medical Institute for research work in connection with the poliomyelitis outbreak, dodged all attention from a social standpoint and within an hour were established in the laboratories in the city health building planning a program of intensive work.

"The two were met at Pasadena by City Health Officer George Parrish, who interested the institution of the survey at the expense of the Rockefeller Foundation. . . . They declined to make any statements except that they are here to work.

"Doctor Paul is from Yale Medical Institute and Doctor Webster is one of the chief assistants to Dr. Simon Flexner, head of the research bureau of the Rockefeller Institute. It was Doctor Flexner who, in 1910, obtained the first definite theory that infantile paralysis is caused by a filterable virus, but little has been learned in addition as to the source and prevention.

"It is the plan of the two physicians, with the assistance of Dr. James F. Trask, of Yale Medical Institute, who will arrive Sunday, to undertake exhaustive laboratory tests and research in an effort to isolate the poliomyelitis virus and, through inoculation experiments with monkeys, seek prevention of the disease in the interest of humanity.

"The result of their tests, it was intimated, will not be made public until they have returned and made their report to Doctor Flexner of the Rockefeller Institute.

"Chief concern was expressed by the two physicians for the care of twenty monkeys brought with them from the East for inoculation experiments. Doctor Paul expressed opposition to any special attention being given by strangers to the simians, stating that they had become excited and nervous on the train trip and that it is very necessary for the success of experiments that they be kept quiet and allowed to rest. . . ."

### DR. GEORGE G. REINLE ELECTED VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE A. M. A.

At the Cleveland session of the American Medical Association, on June 14, the House of Delegates elected Dr. George G. Reinle of Oakland as vice-president of the national organization. Doctor Reinle's term as president of the California Medical Association came to an end at Riverside in May. Last month words of appreciation were

given in this column for his excellent services on behalf of organized medicine in our own State. It is pleasing to note this American Medical Association recognition of California, and of the merits of one of her sons. To Doctor Reinle, on the coming of this new honor, are extended the congratulations of his friends and fellow members in the California Medical Association.

### THIS AND THAT

*Ill-Advised Publicity.*—When emotionally-biased persons group themselves into societies with high sounding preambles to elaborate the purposes of their organizations, the influence resulting from their propaganda is a something that not infrequently must be reckoned with. The members of some of these groups, such as the extreme anti-vivisectionists, at times are almost fanatical in the espousal of their programs. On that account scientific research is in constant danger, through legislative restrictions sponsored by anti-vivisection organizations. Therefore it behooves university authorities to be on guard, to prevent so-called research studies of a spectacular nature, which in lay press accounts become easily distorted. A recent case in point was that of an assistant at Berkeley, who, through so well known a news agency as the Associated Press, was referred to, on April 24, as a "research professor at the University of California," etc., etc. The photographs and description of his dog experiments were given widespread and repeated publicity, and in places did great harm to real scientific research. The fact that the individual in question had only a minor position in the chemistry department at the University of California was not exploited by the lay press, but the name of that great institution was, the publicity doing it, the State and scientific research, considerable harm. The individual in question was given an exit from the Berkeley campus, but that action, even though prompt, could hardly undo the damage of his ill-advised experimentation and its equally undesirable publicity. It might be stressed that this project was undertaken independently, under CWA support and funds, and was not submitted to or authorized by the research authorities of the University of California.

\* \* \*

*Alameda Health Insurance Exposé.*—In the CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE for April, pages 262 and 317, considerable space was given to an account of the successful efforts of District Attorney Earl Warren of Alameda County, in sending some health insurance racketeers to the penitentiary. It is hoped that the good work inaugurated at Oakland will be seriously followed up in other counties of the State, and especially in counties having the larger cities, in which such pseudo-health insurance organizations seem to thrive.

These health racketeers are not the immediate offspring of our present-day economic conditions,